Hilton Lib

Considerations

TOUCHING

The likeliest means to remove

HIRELINGS

out of the church.

Wherein is also discourc'd

Of { *Tithes*, *Church-fees*, *Church-revenues*;

And whether any maintenance of ministers can be settl'd by law.

The author *J. M.*

LONDON:

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TO THE PARLAMENT OF THE commonwealth OF ENGLAND with the dominions therof.

OWing to your protection, supream Senat, this libertie of

writing which I have us'd these 18 years on all occasions to assert the just rights and freedoms both of church and state, and so far approv'd, as to have bin trusted with the representment and defence of your actions to all Christendom against an ad-

adverſarie of no mean repute; to whom ſhould I addreſs what I ſtill publiſh on the ſame argument, but to you whoſe magnanimous councels firſt opend and unbound the age from a double bondage under prelatical and regal tyrannie;

above our own hopes heartning us to look up at last like men and Christians from the slavish dejection, wherin from father to son we were bred up and taught; and thereby deserving of these nations, if they be not barbarously ingrate-

grateful, to be acknowledgd, next under God, the authors and best patrons of religious and civil libertie; that ever these Ilands brought forth. The care and tuition of whose peace and safety, after a short but scandalous night

of interruption, is now again by a new dawning of Gods miraculous providence among us, revolvd upon your shoulders. And to whom more appertain these considerations which I propound, then to your selves and the debate be-

before you, though I truſt of no difficultie, yet at preſent of great expectation, not whether ye will gratifie, were it no more then ſo, but whether ye will hearken to the juſt petition of many thouſands beſt affected both to religi-

on

on and to this your returne, or whether ye will ſatisfie, which you never can, the covetous pretences and demands of insatiable hirelings, whoſe diſaffection ye well know both to your ſelves and your reſolutions, That I, though among many

others

others in this com-
mon concernment,
interpose to your de-
liberations what my
thoughts also are,
your own judgment
and the success ther-
of hath given me the
confidence: which
requests but this, that
if I have prosperous-
ly, God so favoring
me,

me, defended the publick cause of this commonwealth to foreiners, ye would not think the reason and abilitie, wheron ye trusted once, and repent not, your whole reputation to the world, either grown less by more maturitie and longer

studie,

ſtudie, or leſs avail-
able in *Engliſh* then
in another tongue:
but that if it ſuffic'd
ſom years paſt to
convince and ſatisfie
the uningag'd of o-
ther nations in the
juſtice of your do-
ings, though then
held paradoxal, it
may as well ſuffice
now

now against weaker oppofition in matters, except here in *England* with a ſpiritualtie of men devoted to thir temporal gain, of no controverſie els among Proteſtants. Neither do I doubt, ſeeing daily the acceptance which they

finde

finde who in thir petitions venture to bring advice alſo and new modells of a commonwealth, but that you will interpret it much more the dutie of a Chriſtian to offer what his conſcience perſwades him may be of moment to the free-

freedom and better constituting of the church: since it is a deed of highest charitie to help undeceive the people, and a work worthiest your autoritie, in all things els authors, assertors and now recoverers of our libertie, to deliver us,

the

the only people of all Proteſtants left ſtill undeliverd, from the oppreſſions of a Simonious decimating clergie; who ſhame not againſt the judgment and practice of all other churches reformd, to maintain, though very weakly, this

Popiſh

Popiſh and oft re-
futed poſitions, not
in a point of conſci-
ence, wherin they
might be blameles,
but in a point of co-
vetouſnes and un-
juſt claim to other
mens goods; a con-
tention foul and odi-
ous in any man, but
moſt of all in mini-
ſters

ſters of the goſpel, in whom contention, though for thir own right, ſcarce is allowable. Till which greevances be removʼd and religion ſet free from the monopolie of hirelings, I dare affirme, that no modell whatſoever of a common-

wealth

wealth will prove ſuccesful or undiſturbd; and ſo perſwaded, implore divine aſſiſtance on your pious councels and proceedings to unanimitie in this and all other truth.

John Milton.

CONSIDERATIONS touching the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church.

THe former treatise, which leads in this, begann with two things ever found working much mischief to the church of God, and the advancement of truth; force on the one side restraining, and hire on the other side corrupting the teachers thereof. The latter of these is by much the more

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dangerous: for under force, though no thank to the forcers, true religion oft-times best thrives and flourishes: but the corruption of teachers, most commonly the effect of hire, is the very bane of truth in them who are so corrupted. Of force not to be us'd in matters of religion, I have already spoken; and so stated matters of conscience and religion in faith and divine worship, and so severd them from blasphemie and heresie, the one being such properly as is despiteful, the other such as stands not to the rule of Scripture, and so both of them not matters of religion, but rather against it, that

to them who will yet use force, this only choise can be left, whether they will force them to beleeve, to whom it is not given from above, being not forc'd thereto by any principle of the gospel, which is now the only dispensation of God to all men, or whether being Protestants, they will punish in those things wherin the Protestant religion denies them to be judges, either in themselves infallible or to the consciences of other men, or whether, lastly, they think fit to punish error, supposing they can be infallible that it is so, being not wilful, but conscientious, and, according to the best light of him who

ers, grounded on scripture: which kinde of error all men religious, or but only reasonable, have thought worthier of pardon; and the growth therof to be prevented by spiritual means and church-discipline, not by civil laws and outward force; since it is God only who gives as well to beleeve aright, as to beleeve at all; and by those means which he ordaind sufficiently in his church to the full execution of his divine purpose in the gospel. It remanes now to speak of hire; the other evil so mischeevous in religion: wherof I promisd then to speak further, when I should finde God disposing

posing me, and opportunity inviting. Opportunity I finde now inviting; and apprehend therin the concurrence of God disposing; since the maintenance of church-ministers, a thing not properly belonging to the magistrate, and yet with such importunity call'd for, and expected from him, is at present under publick debate. Wherin least any thing may happen to be determind and establishd prejudicial to the right and freedom of church, or advantageous to such as may be found hirelings therin, it will be now most seasonable, and in these matters wherin every Christian hath his free suffrage,

no way misbecoming Christian meeknes to offer freely, without disparagement to the wisest, such advice as God shall incline him and inable him to propound. Since heretofore in commonwealths of most fame for government, civil laws were not establishd till they had been first for certain dayes publishd to the view of all men, that who so pleasd might speak freely his opinion therof, and give in his exceptions, ere the law could pass to a full establishment. And where ought this equity to have more place, then in the libertie which is unseparable from Christian religion? This, I am

am not ignorant, will be a work unpleasing to some: but what truth is not hateful to some or other, as this, in likelihood, will be to none but hirelings. And if there be among them who hold it thir duty to speak impartial truth, as the work of their ministry, though not performed without monie, let them not envie others who think the same no less thir duty by the general office of Christianity, to speak truth, as in all reason may be thought, more impartially and unsuspectedly without monie.

Hire of it self is neither a thing unlawful, nor a word

of any evil note, signifying no more then a due recompence or reward; as when our Saviour saith, *the labourer is worthy of his hire*. That which makes it so dangerous in the church, and properly makes the *hireling*, a word always of evil signification, is either the excess thereof, or the undue manner of giving and taking it. What harme the excess therof brought to the church, perhaps was not found by experience till the days of *Constantine*: who out of his zeal thinking he could be never too liberally a nursing father of the church, might be not unfitly said to have either overlaid it or choakd

choakd it in the nursing. Which was foretold, as is recorded in ecclesiastical traditions, by a voice heard from heaven on the very day that those great donations and church-revenues were given, crying aloud, *This day is poison pourd into the church.* Which the event soon after verifi'd; as appeers by another no less ancient observation, *That religion brought forth wealth, and the daughter devourd the mother.* But long ere wealth came into the church, so soone as any gain appeerd in religion, hirelings were apparent; drawn in long before by the very sent thereof. *Judas* therefor, the first

hireling, for want of present hire answerable to his coveting, from the small number or the meanness of such as then were the religious, sold the religion it self with the founder therof, his master. *Simon Magus* the next, in hope only that preaching and the gifts of the holy ghost would prove gainful, offerd beforehand a sum of monie to obtain them. Not long after, as the apostle foretold, hirelings like wolves came in by herds, *Acts* 20. 29. *For, I know this, that after my departing shall greevous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.* Tit. 1. 11. *Teaching things which they ought not, for filthy*

filthy lucres sake. 2 Pet. 2. 3. *And through covetousnes shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.* Yet they taught not fals doctrin only, but seeming piety: 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. *supposing that gain is Godlines.* Neither came they in of themselves only, but invited oft-times by a corrupt audience: 2 *Tim.* 4. 3. *For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrin, but after their own lusts they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears:* and they on the other side, as fast heaping to themselves disciples, *Acts* 20. 30, doubtles had as itching palmes. 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. *Following the way of Balaam,*

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the son of Bosor, *who lovd the wages of unrighteousnes.* Jude 11. *They ran greedily after the error of* Balaam *for reward.* Thus we see that not only the excess of hire in wealthiest times, but also the undue and vitious taking or giving it, though but small or mean, as in the primitive times, gave to hirelings occasion, though not intended, yet sufficient, to creep at first into the church. Which argues also the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, to remove them quite; unless every minister were, as St. *Paul*, contented to teach *gratis*: but few such are to be found. As therefor we cannot justly take away all hire-

hire in the church, because we cannot otherwise quite remove all hirelings, so are we not for the impossibility of removing them all, to use therefor no endevor that fewest may come in: but rather, in regard the evil, do what we can, will alwayes be incumbent and unavoidable, to use our utmost diligence, how it may be least dangerous. Which will be likeliest effected, if we consider, first, what recompence God hath ordaind should be given to ministers of the church; (for that a recompence ought to be given them, and may by them justly be received, our Saviour himself from the very

light

light of reason, and of equity hath declar'd: *Luke* 10. 7. *The laborer is worthy of his hire*) next by whom; and lastly, in what manner.

What recompence ought be given to church-ministers, God hath answerably ordaind according to that difference which he hath manifestly put between those his two great dispensations, the law and the gospel. Under the law he gave them tithes; under the gospel, having left all things in his church to charity and Christian freedom, he hath given them only what is justly given them. That, as well under the gospel as under the law, say our English divines,

and

and they only of all Protestants, is tithes; and they say true; if any man be so minded to give them of his own the tenth or twentith: but that the law therefor of tithes is in force under the gospel, all other Protestant divines, though equally concernd, yet constantly deny. For although hire to the laborer be of moral and perpetual right, yet that special kinde of hire, the tenth, can be of no right or necessity, but to that special labor for which God ordaind it. That special labor was the Levitical and ceremonial service of the tabernacle, *Numb.* 28. 23, 31. which is now abolishd: the right therefor of

of that special hire must needs be withall abolishd, as being also ceremonial. That tithes were ceremonial, is plane; not being given to the Levites till they had bin first offerd a heave-offering to the Lord, *Vers.* 24, 28. He then who by that law brings tithes into the gospel, of necessity brings in withall a sacrifice, and an altar; without which tithes by that law were unsanctifi'd and polluted, *Vers.* 32. and therefor never thought on in the first Christian times, till ceremonies, altars, and oblations, by an ancienter corruption were brought back long before. And yet the *Jewes* ever since thir temple

was destroid; though they have Rabbies and teachers of thir law, yet pay no tithes, as having no Levites to whom, no temple where to pay them; no altar wheron to hallow them; which argues that the *Jewes* themselves never thought tithes moral, but ceremoniall only. That Christians therefor should take them up, when *Jewes* have laid them down, must needs be very absurd and preposterous. Next, it is as cleer in the same chapter, that the priests and Levites had not tithes for their labor only in the tabernacle, but in regard they were to have no other part nor inheritance in the

the land, *Vers.* 20, 24. and by that means for a tenth lost a twelfth. But our levites undergoing no such law of deprivement, can have no right to any such compensation: nay, if by this law they will have tithes, can have no inheritance of land, but forfeit what they have. Besides this, tithes were of two sorts, those of every year, and those of every third year: of the former, every one that brought his tithes, was to eat his share. *Deut.* 14. 23. *Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall chuse to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oyle, &c.* Nay, though he

he could not bring his tithe in kinde, by reason of his distant dwelling from the tabernacle or temple, but was thereby forc'd to turn it into monie, he was to bestow that monie on whatsoever pleasd him; oxen, sheep, wine, or strong drink; and to eat and drink therof there before the Lord both he and his houshold, *Ver.* 24, 25, 26. As for the tithes of every third year, they were not given only to the Levite, but to the stranger, the fatherles, and the widdow, *Vers.* 28, 29. & *Chap.* 26. 12, 13. So that ours, if they will have tithes, must admitt of these sharers with them. Nay, these tithes were not paid in at

all to the Levite, but the Levite himself was to come with those his fellow guests and eat his share of them only at his house who provided them; and this not in regard of his ministerial office, but because he had no part nor inheritance in the land. Lastly, the priests and Levites, a tribe, were of a far different constitution from this of our ministers under the gospel: in them were orders and degrees both by family, dignity and office, mainly distinguishd; the high priest, his brethren and his sons, to whom the Levites themselves paid tithes, and of the best, were eminently superior, *Num.* 18.

18. 28, 29. No Protestant, I suppose, will liken one of our ministers to a high priest, but rather to a common Levite. Unless then, to keep their tithes, they mean to bring back again bishops, archbishops and the whole gang of prelatry, to whom will they themselves pay tythes, as by that law it was a sin to them, if they did not, v. 32. Certainly this must needs put them to a deep demurr, while the desire of holding fast their tithes without sin, may tempt them to bring back again bishops as the likenes of that hierarchy that should receive tithes from them, and the desire to pay none, may advise them

them to keep out of the church all orders above them. But if we have to do at present, as I suppose we have, with true reformed Protestants, not with Papists or prelates, it will not be deni'd that in the gospel there be but two ministerial degrees, presbyters and deacons: which if they contend to have any succession, reference or conformity with those two degrees under the law, priests & Levites, it must needs be such whereby our presbyters or ministers may be answerable to priests, and our deacons to Levites: by which rule of proportion it will follow, that we must pay our tithes to the deacons

only,

only; and they only to the ministers. But if it be true yet that the priesthood of *Aaron* typifi'd a better reality, 1. *Pet.* 2. 5. signifying the Christian true and *holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice*; it follows hence, that we are now justly exempt from paying tithes, to any who claim from *Aaron*, since that priesthood is in us now real, which in him was but a shaddow. Seeing then by all this which hath been shewn that the law of tiches is partly ceremonial, as the work was for which they were given, partly judicial, not of common, but of particular right to the tribe of *Levi*, nor

to them alone, but to the owner also and his houshold, at the time of thir offering, and every three year to the stranger, the fatherles, and the widdow, thir appointed sharers, and that they were a tribe of priests and deacons improperly compar'd to the constitution of our ministery, and the tithes given by that people to those deacons only, it follows that our ministers at this day, being neither priests nor Levites, nor fitly answering to either of them, can have no just title or pretence to tithes, by any consequence drawn from the law of *Moses*. But they think they have yet a better plea in the

example

example of *Melchisedec*, who took tithes of *Abram* ere the law was given: whence they would inferr tithes to be of moral right. But they ought to know, or to remember, that not examples, but express commands oblige our obedience to God or man: next, that whatsoever was don in religion before the law written, is not presently to be counted moral, when as so many things were then don both ceremonial and Judaically judicial, that we need not doubt to conclude all times before Christ, more or less under the ceremonial law. To what end servd els those altars and sacrifices, that di-

ſtinction of clean and unclean entring into the ark, circumciſion and the raiſing up of ſeed to the elder brother, *Gen.* 38. 8? If theſe things be not moral, though before the law, how are tithes, though in the example of *Abram* and *Melchiſedec*? But this inſtance is ſo far from being the juſt ground of a law, that after all circumſtances duly waighd both from *Gen.* 14. and *Heb.* 7. it will not be allowd them ſo much as an example. *Melchiſedec*, beſides his prieſtly benediction, brought with him bread and wine ſufficient to refreſh *Abram* and his whole armie; incited to do ſo, firſt, by the ſecret providence of God,

God, intending him for a type of Christ and his priesthood; next by his due thankfulnes and honor to *Abram*, who had freed his borders of *Salem* from a potent enemie: *Abram* on the other side honors him with the tenth of all, that is to say, (for he took not sure his whole estate with him to that warr) of the spoiles, *Heb.* 7. 4. Incited he also by the same secret providence, to signifie as grandfather of *Levi*, that the Levitical priesthood was excelld by the priesthood of Christ. For the giving of a tenth declar'd it seems in those countreys and times, him the greater who receivd it. That

which next incited him, was partly his gratitude to requite the present, partly his reverence to the person and his benediction: to his person, as a king and priest; greater therefor then *Abram*; who was a priest also, but not a king. And who unhir'd will be so hardy as to say, that *Abram* at any other time ever paid him tithes, either before or after; or had then, but for this accidental meeting and obligement; or that els *Melchisedec* had demanded or exacted them, or took them otherwise, then as the voluntarie gift of *Abram*? But our ministers, though neither priests nor kings more then

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any other Christian, greater in thir own esteem then *Abraham* and all his seed, for the verbal labor of a seventh dayes preachment, not bringing, like *Melchisedec*, bread or wine at thir own cost, would not take only at the willing hand of liberality or gratitude, but require and exact as due the tenth, not of spoiles, but of our whole estates and labors; nor once, but yearly. We then it seems by the example of *Abram* must pay tithes to these *melchisedecs*: but what if the person of *Abram* can either no way represent us, or will oblige the ministers to pay tithes no less then other men? *A-*

bram had not only a priest in his loines, but was himself a priest; and gave tithes to *Melchisedec* either as grandfather of *Levi*, or as father of the faithful. If as grandfather (though he understood it not) of *Levi*, he oblig'd not us but *Levi* only, the inferior priest, by that homage (as the apostle to the *Hebrewes* cleerly anough explanes) to acknowledge the greater. And they who by *Melchisedec* claim from *Abram* as *Levi*'s grandfather, have none to seek thir tithes of but the Levites; where they can finde them. If *Abram* as father of the faithful paid tithes to *Melchisedec*, then certainly the ministers

ministers also, if they be of that number, paid in him equally with the rest. Which may induce us to beleeve, that as both *Abram* and *Melchisedec*, so tithes also in that action typical and ceremonial, signifi'd nothing els but that subjection, which all the faithful, both ministers and people owe to Christ, our high priest and king. In any literal sense from this example they never will be able to extort that the people in those dayes paid tithes to priests; but this only, that one priest once in his life, of spoiles only, and in requital partly of a liberal present, partly of a benediction, gave voluntary tithes,

not to a greater priest then himself as far as *Abram* could then understand, but rather to a priest and king joind in one person. They will reply, perhaps, that if one priest paid tithes to another, it must needs be understood that the people did no less to the priest. But I shall easily remove that necessitie by remembring them that in those dayes was no priest, but the father, or the first born of each familie; and by consequence no people to pay him tithes, but his own children and servants, who had not wherewithall to pay him, but of his own. Yet grant that the people then paid tithes,

tithes, there will not yet be the like reason to enjoin us: they being then under ceremonies, a meer laitie, we now under Christ, a royal priesthood, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9, as we are coheirs, kings and priests with him, a priest for ever after the order or manner of *Melchisedec*. As therefor *Abram* paid tithes to *Melchisedec* because *Levi* was in him, so we ought to pay none because the true *Melchisedec* is in us, and we in him who can pay to none greater, and hath freed us by our union with himself, from all compulsive tributes and taxes in his church. Neither doth the collateral place, *Heb.* 7. make other use of this

ſtory, then to prove Chriſt, perſonated by *Melchiſedec*, a greater prieſt then *Aaron*: *Verſ.*4. *Now conſider how great this man was, &c.* and proves not in the leaſt manner that tithes be of any right to miniſters, but the contrary: firſt the Levites had *a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is of their brethren, though they com out of the loines of Abraham, Verſ.* 5. The commandment then was, it ſeems, to take tithes of the *Jewes* only, and according to the law. That law changing of neceſſity with the prieſthood, no other ſort of miniſters, as they muſt needs be another

ſort,

sort, under another priesthood, can receive that tribute of tithes which fell with that law, unless renu'd by another express command and according to another law: no such law is extant. Next, *Melchisedec* not as a minister, but as Christ himself in person blessd *Abraham*, who *had the promises*, *Vers.6*; and in him blessd all both ministers and people, both of the law and gospel: that blessing declar'd him greater and better then whom he blessd, *Vers.7*; receiving tithes from them all not as a maintenance, which *Melchisedec* needed not, but as a signe of homage and subjection to thir king and priest:

priest: wheras ministers bear not the person of Christ in his priesthood or kingship, bless not as he blesses, are not by their blessing greater then *Abraham*, and all the faithful with themselves included in him, cannot both give and take tithes in *Abram*, cannot claim to themselves that signe of our allegiance due only to our eternal king and priest, cannot therefor derive tithes from *Melchisedec*. Lastly, the eighth verse hath thus: *Here men that die receive tithes: There he received them, of whom it is witnesd that he liveth.* Which words intimate that as he offerd himself once for us, so he received once of us

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in *Abraham*, and in that place the typical acknowledgment of our redemption: which had it bin a perpetual annuitie to Christ, by him claimd as his due, *Levi* must have paid it yearly, as well as then, *Vers.* 9. and our ministers ought still to som *Melchisedec* or other, as well now as they did in *Abraham*. But that Christ never claimd any such tenth as his annual due, much less resign'd it to the ministers, his so officious receivers without express commission, or assignement, will be yet cleerer as we proceed. Thus much may at length assure us, that this example of *Abram* & *Melchisedec*, though I see of late they

they build most upon it, can so little be the ground of any law to us, that it will not so much avail them as to the autoritie of an example. Of like impertinence is that example of *Jacob*, *Gen.* 28.22, who of his free choise, not enjoind by any law, vowd the tenth of all that God should give him: which, for aught appeers to the contrarie, he vowd as a thing no less indifferent before his vow, then the foregoing part thereof; That the stone which he had set there for a pillar, should be God's house. And to whom vowd he this tenth, but to God; not to any priest; for we read of none to him greater then himself?

himself: and to God, no doubt; but he paid what he vowd; both in the building of that *Bethel* with other altars els where, and the expence of his continual sacrifices, which none but he had right to offer. However therefor he paid his tenth, it could in no likelihood, unless by such an occasion as befell his grandfather, but to any priest. But, say they, *All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lords, holy unto the Lord,* *Levit.* 27. 30. And this before it was given to the Levites; therefor since they ceasd. No question; *For the whole earth is the Lords, and*

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the fulnes therof, *Psal.* 24. 1; and the light of nature shews us no less: but that the tenth is his more then the rest, how know I, but as he so declares it? He declares it so here of the land of *Canaan* only, as by all circumstance appeers; and passes by deed of gift this tenth to the Levite; yet so as offerd to him first a heave-offring, and consecrated on his altar, *Numb.* 18. all which I had as little known, but by that evidence. The Levites are ceasd, the gift returns to the giver. How then can we know that he hath given it to any other, or how can these men presume to take it unofferd first to God, unconsecrated,

crated, without an other cleer and expreſs donation, wherof they ſhew no evidence or writing? Beſides, he hath now alienated that holy land: who can warrantably affirme, that he hath ſince hallowd the tenth of this land; which none but God hath power to do or can warrant? Thir laſt prooff they cite out of the goſpel, which makes as little for them; *Matth.* 23. 23; where our Saviour denouncing woe to the Scribes and Phariſes, who paid tithe ſo exactly, and omitted waightier matters, tels them, that theſe they ought to have don, that is, to have paid tithes. For our Saviour ſpake then to

those who observd the law of *Moses*, which was yet not fully abrogated, till the destruction of the temple. And by the way here we may observe out of thir own prooff, that the Scribes and Pharises, though then chief teachers of the people, such at least as were not Levites, did not take tithes, but paid them: So much less covetous were the Scribes and Pharises in those worst times then ours at this day. This is so apparent to the reformed divines of other countreys, that when any one of ours hath attempted in Latine to maintain this argument of tithes, though a man would think they might suffer

him

him without opposition in a point equally tending to the advantage of all ministers, yet they forbear not to oppose him, as in a doctrin not fit to pass unoppos'd under the gospel. Which shews the modestie, the contentednes of those forein pastors with the maintenance given them, thir sinceritie also in the truth, though less gainful, and the avarice of ours: who through the love of their old Papistical tithes, consider not the weak arguments, or rather conjectures and surmises which they bring to defend them. On the other side, although it be sufficient to have prov'd in general the abolish-

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ing of tithes, as part of the Judaical or ceremonial law, which is abolishd all, as well that before as that after *Moses*, yet I shall further prove them abrogated by an express ordinance of the gospel, founded not on any type, or that municipal law of *Moses*, but on moral, and general equitie, given us instead: 1 *Cor.* 9. 13, 14. *Know ye not, that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple; and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? so also the Lord hath ordaind, that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel.* He saith not, Should live on things which were of the temple or

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of the altar, of which were tithes, for that had given them a cleer title: but abrogating that former law of *Moses*, which determind what and how much, by a later ordinance of Christ, which leaves the what and how much indefinit and free, so it be sufficient to live on, he saith, *The Lord hath so ordaind, that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel*; which hath neither temple, altar nor sacrifice: *Heb.* 7. 13. *For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar*: his ministers therefor cannot thence have tithes. And where the Lord

hath

hath so ordaind, we may finde easily in more then one evangelist: *Luke* 10. 7, 8. *In the same house remane, eating and drinking such things as they give: For the laborer is worthy of his hire, &c. And into whatsoever citie you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.* To which ordinance of Christ it may seem likeliest, that the apostle referrs us both here and 1 *Tim.* 5. 18, where he cites this as the saying of our Saviour, *That the laborer is worthy of his hire*: and both by this place of *Luke*, and that of *Matth.* 10. 9,10,11, it evidently appeers that our Saviour ordaind no

certain

certain maintenance for his apostles or ministers publickly or privatly in house or citie receivd, but that, what ever it were, which might suffice to live on: and this not commanded or proportiond by *Abram* or by *Moses*, whom he might easily have here cited, as his manner was, but declar'd only by a rule of common equitie which proportions the hire as well to the abilitie of him who gives as to the labor of him who receives, and recommends him only as worthy, not invests him with a legal right. And mark wheron he grounds this his ordinance; not on a perpetual right of tithes from *Melchi-*

sedec,

ſedec, as hirelings pretend, which he never claimd either for himſelf, or for his miniſters, but on the plane and common equitie of rewarding the laborer; worthy ſomtimes of ſingle, ſomtimes of double honor, not proportionable by tithes. And the apoſtle in this forecited chapter to the *Corinthians*, *Verſ.* 11, affirms it to be no great recompence, if carnal things be reapd for ſpiritual ſown; but to mention tithes, neglects here the fitteſt occaſion that could be offerd him, and leaves the reſt free and undetermind. Certainly if Chriſt or his apoſtles had approv'd of tithes, they would have either

either by writing or tradition recommended them to the church: and that soone would have appeerd in the practise of those primitive and the next ages. But for the first three hundred years and more, in all the ecclesiastical storie, I finde no such doctrin or example: though error by that time had brought back again priests, altars and oblations; and in many other points of religion had miserably Judaiz'd the church. So that the defenders of tithes, after a long pomp and tedious preparation out of Heathen authors, telling us that tithes were paid to *Hercules* and *Apollo*, which perhaps was imi-

tated from the *Jewes*, and as it were bespeaking our expectation, that they will abound much more with autorities out of Christian storie, have nothing of general approbation to beginn with from the first three or four ages, but that which abundantly serves to the confutation of thir tithes; while they confess that churchmen in those ages livd meerly upon freewill offerings. Neither can they say, that tithes were not then paid for want of a civil magistrate to ordain them, for Christians had then also lands, and might give out of them what they pleasd; and yet of tithes then given

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we finde no mention. And the first Christian emperors, who did all things as bishops advis'd them, suppli'd what was wanting to the clergy not out of tithes, which were never motiond, but out of thir own imperial revenues; as is manifest in *Eusebius*, *Theodorit* and *Sozomen*, from *Constantine* to *Arcadius*. Hence those ancientest reformed churches of the *Waldenses*, if they rather continu'd not pure since the apostles, deni'd that tithes were to be given, or that they were ever given in the primitive church; as appeers by an ancient tractate inserted in the *Bohemian* historie. Thus far hath the church bin al-

waies, whether in her prime, or in her ancienteſt reformation, from the approving of tithes: nor without reaſon; for they might eaſily perceive that tithes were fitted to the *Jewes* only, a national church of many incomplete ſynagogues, uniting the accompliſhment of divine worſhip in one temple; and the Levites there had thir tithes paid where they did thir bodilie work; to which a particular tribe was ſet apart by divine appointment, not by the peoples election: but the Chriſtian church is univerſal; not ti'd to nation, dioces or pariſh, but conſiſting of many particular churches complete

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in themſelves; gatherd, not by compulſion or the accident of dwelling nigh togethe, but by free conſent chuſing both thir particular church and thir church-officers. Wheras if tithes be ſet up, all theſe Chriſtian privileges will be diſturbd and ſoone loſt, and with them Chriſtian libertie. The firſt autoritie which our adverſaries bring, after thoſe fabulous apoſtolic canons, which they dare not inſiſt upon, is a provincial councel held at *Cullen*, where they voted tithes to be *Gods rent*, in the year three hundred fifty ſix; at the ſame time perhaps when the three kings

reignd there, and of like autoritie. For to what purpose do they bring these trivial testimonies, by which they might as well prove altars, candles at noone, and the greatest part of those superstitions, fetchd from Paganism or Jewism, which the Papist, inveigl'd by this fond argument of antiquitie, retains to this day? to what purpose those decrees of I know not what bishops, to a Parlament and people who have thrown out both bishops and altars, and promisd all reformation by the word of God? And that altars brought tithes hither, as one corruption begott another, is evident by one of

those

those questions which the monk *Austin* propounded to the Pope, *Concerning those things, which by offerings of the faithful came to the altar*; as *Beda* writes, *l.* 1. *c.*27. If then by these testimonies we must have tithes continu'd, we must again have altars. Of fathers, by custom so calld, they quote *Ambrose*, *Augustin*, and som other ceremonial doctors of the same leaven: whose assertion without pertinent scripture, no reformed church can admitt; and what they vouch, is founded on the law of *Moses*, with which, every where pitifully mistaken, they again incorporate the gospel;

as did the reſt alſo of thoſe titular fathers, perhaps an age or two before them, by many rights and ceremonies, both Jewiſh and Heatheniſh introduc'd; whereby thinking to gain all, they loſt all: and inſtead of winning Jewes and Pagans to be Chriſtians, by too much condeſcending they turnd Chriſtians into Jewes and Pagans. To heap ſuch unconvincing citations as theſe in religion, wherof the ſcripture only is our rule, argues not much learning nor judgment, but the loſt labor of much unprofitable reading. And yet a late hot Quærift for tithes, whom ye may know by his wits lying ever beſide

beſide him in the margent, to be ever beſide his wits in the text, a fierce reformer once, now ranckl'd with a contrary heat, would ſend us back, very reformedly indeed, to learn reformation from *Tyndarus* and *Rebuffus*, two canonical Promooters. They produce next the ancient conſtitutions of this land, *Saxon* laws, edicts of kings, and thir counſels, from *Athelſtan*; in the year nine hundred twenty eight, that tiches by ſtatute were paid: and might produce from *Ina*, above two hundred years before, that *Romeſcot*, or *Peters* penny, was by as good ſtatute law paid to the Pope, from

seven hundred twenty five, and almost as long continu'd. And who knows not that this law of tithes was enacted by those kings and barons upon the opinion they had of thir divine right, as the very words import of *Edward* the Confessor, in the close of that law: *For so blessed* Austin *preachd and taught*; meaning the monk, who first brought the *Romish* religion into *England* from *Gregory* the Pope. And by the way I add, that by these laws, imitating the law of *Moses*, the third part of tithes only was the priests due; the other two were appointed for the poor, and to adorne or repare churches; as the

the canons of *Ecbert* and *Elfric* witnes: *Concil. Brit.* If then these laws were founded upon the opinion of divine autoritie, and that autoritie be found mistaken and erroneous, as hath bin fully manifested, it follows, that these laws fall of themselves with thir fals foundation. But with what face or conscience can they alleage *Moses*, or these laws for tithes, as they now enjoy or exact them; wherof *Moses* ordains the owner, as we heard before, the stranger, the fatherles and the widdow partakers with the Levite; and these fathers which they cite, and these though Romish rather then English laws, allotted

lotted both to priest and bishop the third part only. But these our Protestant, these our new reformed English presbyterian divines, against thir own cited authors, and to the shame of thir pretended reformation, would engross to themselves all tithes by statute; and supported more by thir wilful obstinacie and desire of filthie lucre then by these both insufficient and impertinent autorities, would perswade a Christian magistracie and parlament, whom we trust God hath restor'd for a happier reformation, to impose upon us a Judaical ceremonial law, and yet from that law to be more irregular and un-

unwarrantable, more complying with a covetous clergie, then any of those Popish kings and parlaments alleagd. Another shift they have to plead, that tithes may be moral as well as the sabbath, a tenth of fruits as well as a seaventh of dayes. I answer, that the prelats who urge this argument, have least reason to use it; denying morality in the sabbath, and therin better agreeing with reformed churches abroad then the rest of our divines. As therefor the seaventh day is not moral, but a convenient recourse of worship in fit season, whether seaventh or other number,

ber, so neither is the tenth of our goods, but only a convenient subsistence morally due to ministers. The last and lowest sort of thir arguments, that men purchas'd not thir tithe with thir land and such like pettifoggerie, I omitt; as refuted sufficiently by others: I omitt also thir violent and irreligious exactions, related no less credibly: thir seising of pots and pans from the poor, who have as good right to tithes as they; from som, the very beds; thir sueing and imprisoning; worse then when the canon law was in force; worse then when those wicked sons of *Eli* were priests,

whose

whoſe manner was thus to ſeiſe thir pretended prieſtly due by force, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12, *&c. Whereby men abhorrd the offering of the Lord*; and it may be feard that many will as much abhorr the goſpel, if ſuch violence as this be ſufferd in her miniſters, and in that which they alſo pretend to be the offering of the Lord. For thoſe ſons of *belial* within ſom limits made ſeiſure of what they knew was thir own by an undoubted law; but theſe, from whom there is no ſanctuarie, ſeiſe out of mens grounds, out of mens houſes thir other goods of double, ſomtimes of treble value, for that, which did

not covetousnes and rapine blinde them, they know to be not thir own by the gospel which they preach. Of som more tolerable then these, thus severely God hath spoken: *Esa.* 46. 10, *&c. They are greedy dogs; they all look to thir own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.* With what anger then will he judge them who stand not looking, but under colour of a divine right, fetch by force that which is not thir own, taking his name not in vain, but in violence? Nor content as *Gehazi* was to make a cunning, but a constraind advantage of what thir master bids them give freely, how

how can they but returne ſmitten, worſe then that ſharking miniſter, with a ſpiritual leproſie? And yet they cry out ſacrilege, that men will not be gulld and baffl'd the tenth of thir eſtates by giving credit to frivolous pretences of divine right. Where did God ever cleerly declare to all nations, or in all lands (and none but fooles part with thir eſtates, without cleereſt evidence, on bare ſuppoſals and preſumptions of them who are the gainers thereby) that he requir'd the tenth as due to him or his ſon perpetually and in all places? Where did he demand it, that we might certainly know, as in all.

all claimes of temporal right is just and reasonable? or if demanded, where did he assigne it, or by what evident conveyance to ministers? unless they can demonstrate this by more then conjectures, thir title can be no better to tithes then the title of *Gehazi* was to those things which by abusing his masters name he rookd from *Naaman*. Much less where did he command that tithes should be fetchd by force, where left not under the gospel whatever his right was, to the freewill-offrings of men? Which is the greater sacrilege, to bely divine autoritie, to make the name of Christ accessory to

violence, and, robbing him of the very honor which he aimd at in bestowing freely the gospel, to committ Simonie and rapin, both secular and ecclesiastical, or on the other side, not to give up the tenth of civil right and proprietie to the tricks and impostures of clergie men, contriv'd with all the art and argument that thir bellies can invent or suggest; yet so ridiculous and presuming on the peoples dulnes or superstition, as to think they prove the divine right of thir maintenance by *Abram* paying tithes to *Melchisedec*, when as *Milchisedec* in that passage rather gave maintenance to *Abram*; in whom all

all both priests and ministers, as well as lay-men paid tithes, not receivd them. And because I affirmd above, beginning this first part of my discourse, that God hath given to ministers of the gospel that maintenance only which is justly given them, let us see a little what hath bin thought of that other maintenance besides tithes, which of all Protestants, our English divines either only or most apparently both require and take. Those are, fees for christnings, marriages, and burials: which, though whoso will may give freely, yet being not of right, but of free gift, if they be exacted or

establishd,

eſtabliſhd, they become unjuſt to them who are otherwiſe maintaind; and of ſuch evil note, that even the councel of *Trent, l.2.p.*240, makes them lyable to the laws againſt Simonie, who take or demand fees for the adminiſtring of any ſacrament: *Che la ſinodo volendo levare gli abuſi introdotti, &c.* And in the next page, with like ſeverity condemns the giving or taking for a benefice, and the celebrating of marriages, chriſtnings, and burials, for fees exacted or demanded: nor counts it leſs Simonie to ſell the ground or place of burial. And in a ſtate aſſembly at *Orleans*, 1561, it was

decreed,

decreed, *Che non si potesse essiger cosa alcuna, &c, p.* 429. *That nothing should be exacted for the administring of sacraments, burials, or any other spiritual function.* Thus much that councel, of all others the most Popish, and this assembly of Papists, though, by thir own principles, in bondage to the clergie, were induc'd, either by thir own reason and shame, or by the light of reformation then shining in upon them, or rather by the known canons of many councels and synods long before, to condemne of Simonie spiritual fees demanded. For if the minister be maintaind for his whole ministry, why

ſhould he be twice paid for any part therof? why ſhould he, like a ſervant, ſeek vailes over and above his wages? As for chriſtnings, either they themſelves call men to baptiſm, or men of themſelves com: if miniſters invite, how ill had it becomd *John* the Baptiſt to demand fees for his baptiſing, or Chriſt for his chriſtnings? Far leſs becoms it theſe now, with a greedines lower then that of tradeſmen calling paſſengers to thir ſhop, and yet paid beforehand, to ask again, for doing that which thoſe thir founders did freely. If men of themſelves com to be baptiz'd, they are either brought by

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ſuch as already pay the miniſter, or com to be one of his diſciples and maintainers: of whom to ask a fee as it were for entrance, is a piece of paultry craft or caution, befitting none but beggarly artiſts. Burials and marriages are ſo little to be any part of thir gain, that they who conſider well, may finde them to be no part of thir function. At burials thir attendance they alleage on the corps; all the gueſts do as much unhir'd: But thir praiers at the grave; ſuperſtitiouſly requir'd: yet if requir'd, thir laſt performance to the deceaſd of thir own flock. But the funeral ſermon: at thir choiſe: or if

not,

not, an occasion offerd them to preach out of season, which is one part of thir office. But something must be spoken in praise: if due, thir duty; if undue, thir corruption: a peculiar Simonie of our divines in *England* only. But the ground is broken, and especially thir unrighteous possession, the chancel. To sell that will not only raise up in judgment the Council of *Trent* against them, but will lose them the best champion of tithes, thir zealous antiquary, Sir *Hen: Spelman*; who in a book written to that purpose, by many cited canons, and som even of times corruptest in the church, proves that fees

exacted or demanded for sacraments, marriages, burials, and especially for interring, are wicked, accursed, Simoniacal and abominable. Yet thus is the church, for all this noise of reformation, left still unreformd, by the censure of thir own synods, thir own favorers, a den of theeves and robbers. As for marriages that ministers should meddle with them, as not sanctifi'd or legitimat without their celebration, I finde no ground in scripture either of precept or example. Likeliest it is (which our *Selden* hath well observd, *l.* 2. *c.* 28, *ex. Eb.*) that in imitation of heathen priests who were wont at nuptials

ptials to use many rites and ceremonies, and especially, judging it would be profitable, and the increase of thir autoritie, not to be spectators only in busines of such concernment to the life of man, they insinuated that marriage was not holy without their benediction, and for the better colour, made it a sacrament; being of it self a civil ordinance, a houshold contract, a thing indifferent and free to the whole race of mankinde, not as religious, but as men: best, indeed, undertaken to religious ends, and, as the apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 7, *in the Lord.* Yet not therefor invalid or unholy without

a minister and his pretended necessary hallowing, more then any other act, enterprise or contract of civil life, which ought all to be don also in the Lord and to his glorie. All which, no less then marriage, were by the cunning of priests heretofore, as material to thir profit, transacted at the altar. Our divines denie it to be a sacrament; yet retaind the celebration, till prudently a late parlament recoverd the civil liberty of marriage from thir inroachment; and transferrd the ratifying and registring therof from the canonical shop to the proper cognisance of civil magistrates. Seeing then, that God hath

given

given to ministers under the gospel, that only which is justly given them, that is to say, a due and moderat livelihood, the hire of thir labor, and that the heave-offering of tithes is abolishd with the altar, yea though not abolishd, yet lawles, as they enjoy them, thir Melchisedecian right also trivial and groundles, and both tithes and fees, if exacted or establishd, unjust and scandalous, we may hope, with them remov'd, to remove hirelings in som good measure, whom these tempting baits, by law especially to be recoverd, allure into the church.

The next thing to be conſiderd in the maintenance of miniſters, is by whom it ſhould be given. Wherin though the light of reaſon might ſufficiently informe us, it will be beſt to conſult the ſcripture: *Gal. 6. 6. let him that is taught in the word, communicate, to him that teacheth, in all good things:* that is to ſay, in all manner of gratitude, to his abilitie. 1 *Cor. 9. 11. if we have ſown unto you ſpiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?* to whom therefor hath not bin ſown, from him wherefor ſhould be reapd? 1 *Tim. 5. 17. let the elders that rule well, be counted worthie of double honor;*

eſpe-

especially they who labor in the word and doctrin. By these places we see, that recompence was given either by everyone in particular who had bin instructed, or by them all in common, brought into the church-treasurie, and distributed to the ministers according to thir several labors: and that was judgd either by som extraordinarie person, as *Timothie*, who by the apostle was then left evangelist at *Ephesus*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5, or by som to whom the church deputed that care. This is so agreeable to reason and so cleer, that any one may perceive what iniquitie and violence hath prevaild since in

the church, whereby it hath bin so orderd, that they also shall be compelld to recompence the parochial minister, who neither chose him for thir teacher, nor have receivd instruction from him, as being either insufficient, or not resident, or inferior to whom they follow; wherin to barr them thir choise, is to violate Christian liberty. Our lawbooks testifie, that before the councel of *Lateran*, in the year 1179, and the fifth of our *Henry* 2, or rather before a decretal epistle of Pope *Innocent* the third, about 1200, and the first of king *John*, *any man might have given his tithes to what spiritual person he would:*

would: and, as the L. *Coke* notes on that place, *instit. part* 2, that *this decretal bound not the subjects of this realm; but, as it seemd just and reasonable.* The Pope took his reason rightly from the above cited place, 1 *Cor.* 9. 11: but falsly suppos'd every one to be instructed by his parish-priest. Whether this were then first so decreed or rather long before, as may seem by the laws of *Edgar* and *Canute*, that tithes were to be paid, not to whom he would that paid them, but to the cathedral church or the parish-priest, it imports not; since the reason which they themselves bring, built on fals sup-

position, becoms alike infirme and absurd, that he should reap from me, who sows not to me; bee the cause either his defect, or my free choise. But here it will be readily objected, What if they who are to be instructed be not able to maintain a minister, as in many villages? I answer, that the scripture shews in many places what ought to be don herin. First I offer it to the reason of any man, whether he think the knowledge of Christian religion harder then any other art or science to attain. I suppose he will grant that it is far easier; both of it self, and in regard of Gods assisting spirit, not paricularly pro-

promisd us to the attainment of any other knowledge, but of this only: since it was preachd as well to the shepherds of *Bethleem* by angels, as to the eastern Wisemen by that starr: and our Saviour declares himself anointed to preach the gospel to the poore, *Luke* 4.18. then surely to thir capacitie. They who after him first taught it, were otherwise unlearned men; they who before *Hus* and *Luther* first reformd it, were for the meanenes of thir condition calld, *the poore men of Lions*; and in *Flanders* at this day, *les gueus*, which is to say, beggars. Therefor are the scriptures translated ve-

ry vulgar tongue, as being held in main matters of belief and salvation, plane and easie to the poorest: and such no less then thir teachers have the spirit to guide them in all truth, *Joh.*14. 26, & 16. 13. Hence we may conclude, if men be not all thir life time under a teacher to learn Logic, natural Philosophie, Ethics or Mathematics, which are more difficult, that certainly it is not necessarie to the attainment of Christian knowledge that men should sit all thir life long at the feet of a pulpited divine; while he, a lollard indeed over his elbow-cushion, in almost the seaventh part of 40, or 50.

years

years teaches them scarce half the principles of religion; and his sheep oft-times sit the while to as little purpose of benifiting as the sheep in thir pues at *Smithfield*; and for the most part by som Simonie or other, bought and sold like them: or, if this comparison be too low, like those woemen, 1 *Tim.* 3. 7. *ever learning and never attaining*; yet not so much through thir own faulr, as through the unskilful and immethodical teaching of thir pastor, teaching here and there at random out of this or that text as his ease or fansie, and oft-times as his stealth guides him. Seeing then that Christian religi-

on may be so easily attaind, and by meanest capacities, it cannot be much difficult to finde waies, both how the poore, yea all men may be soone taught what is to be known of Christianitie, and they who teach them, recompenc'd. First, if ministers of thir own accord, who pretend that they are calld and sent to preach the gospel, those especially who have no particular flock, would imitate our Saviour and his disciples who went preaching through the villages, not only through the cities, *Matth.* 9. 35. *Mark* 6. 6. *Luke* 13. 22. *Acts* 8. 25. and there preachd to the poore as well as to the rich, looking

looking for no recompence but in heaven: *John* 4. 35, 36. *Looke on the fields; for they are white alreadie to harvest: and he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gatheretb fruit unto life eternal.* This was their wages. But they will soone reply, we our selves have not wherewithall; who shall bear the charges of our journey? To whom it may as soone be answerd, that in likelihood they are not poorer then they who did thus; and if they have not the same faith which those disciples had to trust in God and the promise of Christ for thir maintenance as they did, and yet intrude into the ministerie without

without any livelihood of thir own; they cast themselves into a miserable hazzard or temptation, and oft-times into a more miserable necessitie, either to starve, or to please thir paymasters rather then God: and give men just cause to suspect, that they came neither calld nor sent from above to preach the word, but from below, by the instinct of thir own hunger, to feed upon the church. Yet grant it needful to allow them both the charges of thir jorney and the hire of thir labor, it will belong next to the charitie of richer congregations, where most commonly they abound with teachers, to send som

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of thir number to the villages round, as the apostles from *Jerusalem* sent *Peter* and *John* to the citie and villages of *Samaria*, *Acts* 8. 14, 25; or as the church at *Jerusalem* sent *Barnabas* to *Antioch*, *chap.* 11. 20; and other churches joining sent *Luke* to travail with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 19: though whether they had thir charges born by the church or no, it be not recorded. If it be objected that this itinerarie preaching will not serve to plant the gospel in those places, unless they who are sent, abide there som competent time, I answer, that if they stay there a year or two, which was the longest time usually

usually staid by the apostles in one place, it may suffice to teach them, who will attend and learn, all the points of religion necessary to salvation; then sorting them into several congregations of a moderat number, out of the ablest and zealousest among them to create elders, who, exercising and requiring from themselves what they have learnd (for no learning is retaind without constant exercise and methodical repetition) may teach and govern the rest: and so exhorted to continue faithful and stedfast, they may securely be committed to the providence of God and the guidance of his holy

spirit,

spirit, till God may offer som opportunitie to visit them again and to confirme them: which when they have don, they have don as much as the apostles were wont to do in propagating the gospel, *Acts* 14. 23. *And when they had ordaind them elders in every church, and had praied with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they beleevd.* And in the same chapter, *Vers.* 21, 22, *When they had preachd the gospel to that citie, and had taught meny, they returned again to* Lystra *and to* Iconium *and* Antioch, *confirming the soules of the disciples*, and *exhorting them to continue in the faith.* And

Chap.

Chap. 15. 36. *Let us go again and visit our brethren.* And *Vers.* 41. *He went thorow* Syria *and* Cilicia, *confirming the churches.* To these I might add other helps, which we enjoy now, to make more easie the attainment of Christian religion by the meanest: the entire scripture translated into English with plenty of notes; and som where or other, I trust, may be found som wholsom bodie of divinitie, as they call it, without schoole terms and metaphysical notions, which have obscur'd rather then explan'd our religion, and made it seem difficult without cause. Thus taught once for all, and

thus

thus now and then visited and confirmd, in the most destitute and poorest places of the land, under the government of thir own elders performing all ministerial offices among them, they may be trusted to meet and edifie one another whether in church or chappel, or, to save them the trudging of many miles thether, neerer home, though in a house or barn. For notwithstanding the gaudy superstition of som devoted still ignorantly to temples, we may be well assur'd that he who disdaind not to be laid in a manger, disdains not to be preachd in a barn; and that by such meetings as these, being, indeed,

most

most apostolical and primitive, they will in a short time advance more in Christian knowledge and reformation of life, then by the many years preaching of such an incumbent, I may say, such an incubus oft times, as will be meanly hir'd to abide long in those places. They have this left perhaps to object further, that to send thus and to maintaine, though but for a year or two, ministers and teachers in several places, would prove chargeable to the churches, though in towns and cities round about. To whom again I answer, that it was not thought so by them who first thus propagated the gospel,

gospel, though but few in number to us, and much less able to sustain the expence. Yet this expence would be much less, then to hire incumbents or rather incumbrances, for life-time; and a great means (which is the subject of this discourse) to diminish hirelings. But be the expence less or more, if it be found burdensom to the churches, they have in this land an easie remedie in thir recourse to the civil magistrate; who hath in his hands the disposal of no small revenues; left, perhaps, anciently to superstitious, but meant undoubtedly to good and best uses; and therefor, once made publick, appliable by

by the present magistrate to such uses as the church or solid reason from whomsoever shall convince him to think best. And those uses may be, no doubt, much rather then as glebes and augmentations are now bestowd, to grant such requests as these of the churches; or to erect in greater number all over the land schooles and competent libraries to those schooles, where languages and arts may be taught free together, without the needles, unprofitable and inconvenient removing to another place. So all the land would be soone better civiliz'd, and they who are taught freely at the publick

cost

coſt, might have thir education given them on this condition, that therewith content, they ſhould not gadd for preferment out of thir own countrey, but continue there thankful for what they receivd freely, beſtowing it as freely on thir countrey, without ſoaring above the meanness wherin they were born. But how they ſhall live when they are thus bred and diſmiſsd, will be ſtill the ſluggiſh objection. To which is anſwerd, that thoſe publick foundations may be ſo instituted, as the youth therin may be at once brought up to a competence of learning and to an honeſt trade; and the

hours of teaching so orderd, as thir studie may be no hindrance to thir labor or other calling. This was the breeding of S. *Paul*, though born of no mean parents, a free citizen of the Roman empire: so little did his trade debase him, that it rather enabld him to use that magnanimitie of preaching the gospel through *Asia* and *Europe* at his own charges: thus those preachers among the poor *Waldenses*, the ancient stock of our reformation, without these helps which I speak of, bred up themselves in trades, and especially in physic and surgery as well as in the studie of scripture (which is the only true theo-

theologie) that they might be no burden to the church; and by the example of Christ, might cure both soul and bodie; through industry joining that to their ministerie, which he joind to his by gift of the spirit. Thus relates *Peter Gilles* in his historie of the *Waldenses* in *Piemont*. But our ministers think scorn to use a trade, and count it the reproach of this age, that tradesmen preach the gospel. It were to be wishd they were all tradesmen; they would not then so many of them, for want of another trade, make a trade of thir preaching: and yet they clamor that tradesmen preach; and yet they

preach, while they themselves are the worst tradesmen of all. As for church-endowments and possessions, I meet with none considerable before *Constantine*, but the houses and gardens where they met, and thir places of burial: and I perswade me, that from them the ancient *Waldenses*, whom deservedly I cite so often, held, *that to endow churches is an evil thing*; and, that the church then fell off and turnd whore sitting on that beast in the *Revelation*, when under Pope *Sylvester* she receivd those temporal donations. So the forecited tractate of thir doctrin testifies. This also thir own traditions of that heaven-

heavenly voice witnesd, and som of the ancient fathers then living, foresaw and deplor'd. And indeed, how could these endowments thrive better with the church, being unjustly taken by those emperors, without suffrage of the people, out of the tributes and publick lands of each citie, wherebу the people became liable to be oppresd with other taxes. Being therefor given for the most part by kings and other publick persons, and so likeliest out of the publick, and if without the peoples consent, unjustly, however to publick ends of much concernment to the good or evil of a common-

wealth, and in that regard made publick though given by privat persons, or which is worse, given, as the clergie then perswaded men, for thir soul's health, a pious gift, but as the truth was, oft times a bribe to God or to Christ for absolution, as they were then taught, from murders, adulteries, and other hainous crimes, what shall be found heretofore given by kings or princes out of the publick, may justly by the magistrate be recalld and reappropriated to the civil revenue: what by privat or publick persons out of thir own, the price of blood or lust, or to som such purgatorious and superstitious

uses,

uſes, not only may but ought to be taken off from Chriſt, as a foul diſhonor laid upon him, or not impiouſly given, nor in particular to any one, but in general to the churches good, may be converted to that uſe, which ſhall be judgd tending more directly to that general end. Thus did the princes and cities of *Germany* in the firſt reformation; and defended their ſo doing by many reaſons, which are ſet down at large in *Sleidan, l.6, an.*1526; and *l.*11, *an.* 1537, and *l.* 13, *an.* 1540. But that the magiſtrate either out of that church revenue which remanes yet in his hand, or e-

ſtabliſhing any other maintenance inſtead of tithe, ſhould take into his own power the ſtipendiarie maintenance of church-miniſters, or compell it by law, can ſtand neither with the peoples right nor with Chriſtian liberty, but would ſuſpend the church wholly upon the ſtate, and turn her miniſters into ſtate-penſioners. And for the magiſtrate in perſon of a nurſing father to make the church his meer ward, as alwaies in minoritie, the church, to whom he ought as a magiſtrate, *Eſa.* 49. 23, *To bow down with his face toward the earth, and lick up the duſt of her feet*, her to ſubject to his political drifts

or conceivd opinions by mastring her revenue, and so by his examinant committies to circumscribe her free election of ministers, is neither just nor pious; no honor don to to the church, but a plane dishonor: and upon her, whose only head is in heaven, yea upon him, who is her only head, sets another in effect, and, which is most monstrous, a human on a heavenly, a carnal on a spiritual, a political head on an ecclesiastical bodie; which at length by such hetero geneal, such incestuous conjunction, transformes her ofttimes into a beast of many heads and many horns. For if the

church be of all societies the holiest on earth, and so to be reverenc'd by the magistrate, not to trust her with her own belief and integritie, and therefor not with the keeping, at least with the disposing of what revenue shall be found justly and lawfully her own, is to count the church not a holy congregation, but a pack of gidcy or dishonest persons, to be rul'd by civil power in sacred affairs. But to proceed further in the truth yet more freely, seeing the Christian church is not national, but consisting of many particular congregations, subject to many changes, as well through

through civil accidents as through schism and various opinions, not to be decided by any outward judge, being matters of conscience, whereby these pretended church-revenues, as they have bin ever, so are like to continue endles matter of dissention both between the church and magistrate, and the churches among themselves, there will be found no better remedie to these evils, otherwise incurable, then by the incorruptest councel of those *Waldenses*, our first reformers, to remove them as a pest, an apple of discord in the church, (for what els can be the effect of riches and the snare of monie in religion?).

ligion:) and to convert them to those more profitable uses above expressd; or other such as shall be judgd most necessarie; considering that the church of Christ was founded in poverty rather then in revenues, stood purest and prosperd best without them, receivd them unlawfully from them who both erroneously and unjustly, somtimes impiously, gave them, and so justly was ensnar'd and corrupted by them. And least it be thought that these revenues withdrawne and better imploid, the magistrate ought in stead to settle by statute som maintenance of ministers, let this be considerd first, that

it concerns every mans conscience to what religion he contributes; and that the civil magistrate is intrusted with civil rights only, not with conscience, which can have no deputy or representer of it self, but one of the same minde: next, that what each man gives to the minister, he gives either as to God, or as to his teacher; if as to God, no civil power can justly consecrate to religious uses any part either of civil revenue, which is the peoples, and must save them from other taxes, or of any mans proprietie, but God by special command, as he did by *Moses*, or the owner himself

by voluntarie intention and the perswasion of his giving it to God; forc'd consecrations out of another mans estate are no better then forc'd vowes; hateful to God, who *loves a cheerful giver*; but much more hateful, wrung out of mens purses to maintaine a disapprov'd ministerie against thir conscience; however, unholy, infamous and dishonorable to his ministers and the free gospel, maintained in such unworthy manner as by violence and extortion: If he give it as to his teacher, what justice or equitie compells him to pay for learning that religion which leaves freely to his choise whether

he will learn it or no, whether of this teacher or another, and especially to pay for what he never learnd, or approves not; whereby, besides the wound of his conscience, he becoms the less able to recompence his true teacher: Thus far hath bin enquir'd by whom church-ministers ought to be maintaind; and hath bin prov'd most natural, most equal and agreeable with scripture, to be by them who receive thir teaching; and by whom, if they be unable. Which waies well observd, can discourage none but hirelings, and will much lessen thir number in the church.

It remanes lastly to consider in what manner God hath ordaind that recompence be given to ministers of the gospel: and by all scripture it will appeer that he hath given it them not by civil law and freehold, as they claim, but by the benevolence and free gratitude of such as receive them: *Luke* 10. 7, 8. *Eating and drinking such things as they give you. If they receive you, eate such things as are set before you.* *Matth.* 10. 7, 8. *As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdome of God is at hand, &c. Freely ye have receiud, freely give.* If God have ordaind ministers to preach freely, whether they receive

receive recompence or not, then certainly he hath forbidd both them to compell it, and others to compell it for them. But freely given, he accounts it as given to himself: *Phillip.4. 16,17,18. Ye sent once and again to my necessitie. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. Having receivd of* Epaphroditus *the things which were sent from you, an odour of sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.* Which cannot be from force or unwillingnes. The same is said of almes, *Heb.* 13. 16. *To do good and to communicate, forgett not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleasd.* Whence the

the primitive church thought it no shame to receive all thir maintenance as the almes of thir auditors. Which they who defend tithes, as if it made for thir cause, when as it utterly confutes them, omitt not to set down at large; proving to our hands out of *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others, that the clergie livd at first upon the meer benevolence of thir hearers: who gave what they gave, not to the clergie, but to the church; out of which the clergie had thir portions given them in baskets; and were thence calld *sportularii*, *basket clerks*: that thir portion was a very mean allow-

ance,

ance, only for a bare livelihood; according to those precepts of our Saviour, *Matth.* 10. 7, *&c*; the rest was distributed to the poore. They cite also out of *Prosper*, the disciple of St. *Austin*, that such of the clergie as had means of their own, might not without sin partake of church-maintenance; not receiving thereby food which they abound with, but feeding on the sins of other men: that the holy ghost saith of such clergie men, they eat the sins of my people: and that a councel at *Antioch*, in the year 340, sufferd not either priest or bishop to live on church-maintenance without necessitie. Thus

far

far tithers themselves have contributed to thir own confutation, by confessing that the church livd primitively on almes. And I add, that about the year 359, *Constantius* the emperor having summond a general councel of bishops to *Ariminum* in *Italie*, and provided for thir subsistence there, the *British* and *French* bishops judging it not decent to live on the publick, chose rather to be at thir own charges. Three only out of *Britain*, constraind through want, yet refusing offerd assistance from the rest, accepted the emperor's provision; judging it more convenient to subsist by publick then by privat

privat sustenance. Whence we may conclude, that *bishops* then in this Iland had thir livelihood only from benevolence: in wch regard this relater *Sulpitius Severus*, a good author of the same time, highly praises them. And the *Waldenses*, our first reformers, both from the scripture and these primitive examples, maintaind those among them who bore the office of ministers, by almes only. Take thir very words from the historie written of them in *French, Part. 3. l. 2. c. 2, La nourriture & ce de quoy nous sommes couverts &c. Our food & cloathing is sufficiently administerd & given to us by way of gratuitie and almes, by the good people*

whom we teach. If then by almes and benevolence, not by legal force, not by tenure of freehold or copyhold: for almes, though just, cannot be compelld; and benevolence forc'd, is malevolence rather, violent and inconsistent with the gospel; and declares him no true minister therof, but a rapacious hireling rather, who by force receiving it, eats the bread of violence and exaction, no holy or just livelihood, no not civilly counted honest; much less beseeming such a spiritual ministry. But, say they, our maintenance is our due, tithes the right of Christ, unseparable from the priest, no where repeald; if then,

then, not otherwise to be had, by law to be recoverd: for though *Paul* were pleasd to forgoe his due, and not to use his power, 1 *Cor.* 9. 12, yet he had a power, *v.* 4, and bound not others. I answer first, because I see them still so loath to unlearn thir decimal arithmetic, and still grasp thir tithes as inseparable from a priest, that ministers of the gospel are not priests; and therefor separated from tithes by thir own exclusion; being neither calld priests in the new testament, nor of any order known in scripture: not of *Melchisedec*, proper to Christ only; not of *Aaron*, as they themselves will confess; and

the third priesthood, only remaining, is common to all the faithful. But they are ministers of our high priest. True, but not of his priesthood, as the Levites were to *Aaron*: for he performs that whole office himself incommunicably. Yet tithes remane, say they, still unreleasd, the due of Christ; and to whom payable, but to his ministers? I say again, that no man can so understand them, unless Christ in som place or other so claim them. That example of *Abram* argues nothing but his voluntarie act; honor once only don, but on what consideration, whether to a priest or to a king, whether due

due the honor, arbitrarie that kinde of honor or not, will after all contending be left still in meer conjecture: which must not be permitted in the claim of such a needy and suttle spiritual corporation pretending by divine right to the tenth of all other mens estates; nor can it be allowd by wise men or the verdit of common law. And the tenth part, though once declar'd holy, is declar'd now to be no holier then the other nine, by that command to *Peter Act.* 10.15. 28: whereby all distinction of holy and unholy is remov'd from all things. Tithes therefor though claimd, and holy under the law, yet are now re-

leasd and quitted both by that command to *Peter*, and by this to all ministers, above-cited *Luke* 10; *eating and drinking such things as they give you*: made holy now by thir free gift only. And therefor S. *Paul*, 1. *Cor*. 9. 4, asserts his power, indeed; but of what? not of tithes, but, *to eat and drink such things as are given* in reference to this command: which he calls not holy things or things of the gospel, as if the gospel had any consecrated things in answer to things of the temple, *v*. 13, but he calls them *your carnal things*, *v*. 11. without changing thir property. And what power had he? not the

power

power of force but of conscience only, whereby he might lawfully and without scruple live on the gospel; receiving what was given him, as the recompence of his labor. For if Christ the master hath professd his kingdom to be not of this world, it suits not with that profession either in him or his ministers to claim temporal right from spiritual respects. He who refusd to be the divider of an inheritance between two brethren, cannot approve his ministers by pretended right from him to be dividers of tenths and freeholds out of other mens possessions, making thereby the gospel but a cloak of carnal

interest, and, to the contradiction of thir master, turning his heavenly kingdom into a kingdom of this world, a kingdom of force and rapin. To whom it will be one day thunderd more terribly then to *Gehazi*, for thus dishonoring a far greater master and his gospel, *is this a time to receive monie and to receive garments and olive-yards and vinyards and sheep and oxen?* The leprosie of *Naaman* linkd with that apostolic curse of *perishing* imprecated on *Simon Magus*, may be feard will *cleave to* such *and to* thir *seed for ever.* So that when all is don, and bellie hath us'd in vain all her cunning shifts, I doubt

doubt not but all true ministers, considering the demonstration of what hath bin here prov'd, will be wise, and think it much more tolerable to hear, that no maintenance of ministers, whether tithes or any other, can be settl'd by statute; but must be given by them who receive instruction; and freely given, as God hath ordaind. And indeed what can be a more honorable maintenance to them, then such whether almes or willing oblations as these, which being accounted both alike as given to God, the only acceptable sacrifices now remaining, must needs represent him who receives them

much in the care of God and neerly related to him, when not by worldly force and constraint, but with religious awe and reverence, what is given to God, is given to him, and what to him, accounted as given to God. This would be well anough, say they; but how many will so give? I answer, as many, doubtles, as shall be well taught; as many as God shall so move. Why are ye so distrustful both of your own doctrin and of Gods promises, fulfilld in the experience of those disciples first sent: *Luke* 22. 35. *When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lackd ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.* How then

then came ours, or who sent them thus destitute, thus poor and empty both of purse and faith? Who stile themselves embassadors of Jesus Christ, and seem to be his tithe-gatherers, though an office of thir own setting up to his dishonor, his exacters, his publicans rather, not trusting that he will maintain them in thir embassy, unless they binde him to his promise by a statute law that we shall maintain them. Lay down for shame that magnific title, while ye seek maintenance from the people: it is not the manner of embassadors to ask maintenance of them to whom they are sent. But he who is

Lord of all things, hath so ordaind: trust him then; he doubtles will command the people to make good his promises of maintenance more honorably unaskd, unrak'd for. This they know, this they preach, yet beleeve not: but think it as impossible without a statute law to live of the gospel, as if by those words they were bid go eat thir bibles, as *Ezechiel* and *John* did thir books; and such doctrins as these are as bitter to thir bellies: but will serve so much the better to discover hirelings, who can have nothing, though but in appearance, just and solid to answer for themselves against

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what hath bin here ſpoken, unleſs perhaps this one remaining pretence, which we ſhall quickly ſee to be either fals or uningenuous. They pretend that thir education either at ſchoole or univerſitie hath bin very chargeable; and therefor ought to be repai'd in future by a plentiful maintenance: whenas it is well knowa that the better half of them, and oft times poor and pitiful boyes of no merit or promiſing hopes that might intitle them to the publick proviſion but thir povertie and the unjuſt favor of friends, have had the moſt of thir breeding both at ſchoole and univerſitie by ſchollarships,

exhibitions and fellowſhips at the publick coſt; which might ingage them the rather to give freely, as they have freely receivd. Or if they have miſſd of theſe helps at the latter place, they have after two or three years left the cours of thir ſtudies there, if they ever well began them, and undertaken, though furniſhd with little els but ignorance, boldnes and ambition, if with no worſe vices, a chaplainſhip in ſom gentlemans houſe, to the frequent imbaſing of his ſons with illiterate and narrow principles. Or if they have livd there upon thir own, who knows not that ſeaven years charge of living

there,

there, to them who fly not from the government of thir parents to the license of a universitie, but com seriously to studie, is no more then may be well defraid and reimbours'd by one years revenue of an ordinary good benifice? If they had then means of breeding from thir parents, 'tis likely they have more now; and if they have, it needs must be mechanique and uningenuous in them to bring a bill of charges for the learning of those liberal arts and sciences, which they have learnd (if they have indeed learnd them, as they seldom have) to thir own benefit and accomplishment. But

they

they will say, we had betaken unto som other trade or profession, had we not expected to finde a better livelihood by the ministerie. This is that which I lookd for, to discover them openly neither true lovers of learning, and so very seldom guilty of it, nor true ministers of the gospel. So long agoe out of date is that old *true saying*; 1 *Tim.* 3. 1. *if a man desire a bishoprick, he desires a good work*: for now commonly he who desires to be a minister, looks not at the work but at the wages; and by that lure or loubel may be toald from parish to parish all the town over. But what can be planer Simonie, then thus

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to be at charges beforehand to no other end then to make thir ministry doubly or trebly beneficial? to whom it might be said as justly as to that *Simon, thy monie perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchas'd with monie: thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter.* Next, it is a fond error, though too much beleevd among us, to think that the universitie makes a minister of the gospel; what it may conduce to other arts and sciences, I dispute not now: but that which makes fit a minister, the scripture can best informe us to be only from above; whence also we are bid to seek them;

them; *Matth. 9. 38. Pray ye therefore to the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.* Acts 20. 28. *The flock, over which the holy ghost hath made you over-seers.* Rom. 10. 15. *How shall they preach, unless they be sent?* by whom sent? by the universitie, or the magistrate, or thir belly? no surely: but sent from God only, and that God who is not thir belly. And whether he be sent from God or from *Simon Magus*, the inward sense of his calling and spiritual abilitie will sufficiently tell him; and that strong obligation felt within him, which was felt by the apostle, will often express

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from him the same words: 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. *Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is me, if I preach not the gospel.* Not a beggarly necessity, and the woe feard otherwise of perpetual want, but such a necessitie as made him willing to preach the gospel *gratis*, and to embrace povertie rather then as a woe to fear it. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath set som in the church, first apostles, &c.* Eph. 4. 11, *&c.* *He gave som apostles, &c. For the perfeting of the saints, for the work of the ministerie, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unitie of the faith.* Whereby we may know that as he made them at the first,

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so he makes them still, and to the worlds end. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. *Who hath also made us fit or able ministers of the new testament.* 1 Tim. 4. 14. *The gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesie and the laying on of the hands of the presbyterie.* These are all the means which we read of requir'd in scripture to the making of a minister. All this is granted you will say: but yet that it is also requisite he should be traind in other learning; which can be no where better had then at universities. I answer, that what learning either human or divine can be necessary to a minister, may as easily and less chargeably be-

be had in any private house. How deficient els and to how little purpose are all those piles of sermons, notes, and comments on all parts of the bible, bodies and marrows of divinitie, besides all other sciences, in our English tongue; many of the same books which in Latine they read at the universitie: And the small necessitie of going thether to learn divinitie, I prove first from the most part of themselves, who seldom continue there till they have well got through Logic, thir first rudiments; though, to say truth, Logic also may much better be wanting in disputes of divinitie, then in the-

the suttle debates of lawyers and statesmen, who yet seldom or never deal with syllogisms. And those theological disputations there held by Professors and graduates are such as tend least of all to the edification or capacitie of the people, but rather perplex and leaven pure doctrin with scholastical trash then enable any minister to the better preaching of the gospel. Whence we may also compute, since they com to recknings, the charges of his needful library: which, though som shame not to value at 600 l, may be competently furnishd for 60 l. If any man for his own curiositie or de-

light

light be in books further expensive, that is not to be reckn'd as necessarie to his ministerial either breeding or function. But Papists and other adversaries cannot be confuted without fathers and councels, immense volumes and of vast charges. I will shew them therefor a shorter and a better way of confutation: *Tit.* 1. 9. *Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath bin taught, that he may be able by sound doctrin, both to exhort and to convince gain-sayers:* who are confuted as soon as heard, bringing that which is either not in scripture or against it. To persue them further through the obscure

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and intangld wood of antiquitie, fathers and councels fighting one against another, is needles, endles, not requisite in a minister, and refus'd by the first reformers of our religion. And yet we may be confident, if these things be thought needful, let the state but erect in publick good store of libraries, and there will not want men in the church, who of their own inclinations will become able in this kinde against Papist or any other adversarie. I have thus at large examind the usual pretences of hirelings, colourd over most commonly with the cause of learning and universities: as if with divines

divines learning stood and fell; wherin for the most part this pittance is so small: and, to speak freely, it were much better, there were not one divine in the universitie; no schoole-divinitie known, the idle sophistrie of monks, the canker of religion; and that they who intended to be ministers, were traind up in the church only, by the scripture and in the original languages therof at schoole; without fetching the compas of other arts and sciences, more then what they can well learn at secondary leasure and at home. Neither speak I this in contempt of learning or the ministry; but hating

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the common cheats of both; hating that they who have preachd out bishops, prelats and canonists, should, in what serves thir own ends, retain thir fals opinions, thir Pharisaical leaven, thir avarice and closely thir ambition, thir pluralities, thir nonresidences, thir odious fees, and use thir legal and Popish arguments for tithes: that Independents should take that name, as they may justly from the true freedom of Christian doctrin and church-discipline subject to no superior judge but God only, and seek to be Dependents on the magistrate for thir maintenance; which two things, independence and state-

state-hi[illegible]eligion, can never conti[illegible] long or certainly together. For magistrates at one time or other, not like these at present our patrons of Christian libertie, will pay none but such whom by thir committies of examination, they find conformable to their interest and opinions: and hirelings will soone frame themselves to that interest and those opinions which they see best pleasing to thir paymasters; and to seem right themselves, will force others as to the truth. But most of all they are to be revil'd and sham'd, who cry out with the distinct voice of notorious hirelings, that if ye settle not

our maintenance [illegible]w, far-well the gospel: [illegible] which nothing can be utterd more fals, more ignominious, and, I may say, more blasphemous against our Saviour; who hath promisd, without this condition, both his holy spirit and his own presence with his church to the worlds end: nothing more fals (unless with thir own mouths they condemne themselves for the unworthiest and most mercenary of all other ministers) by the experience of 300. years after Christ, and the churches at this day in *France*, *Austria*, *Polonia*, and other places witnessing the contrary under an advers magistrate not a favorable:

rable: nothing more ignominious, levelling or rather undervaluing Christ beneath *Mahomet*. For if it must be thus, how can any Christian object it to a Turk, that his religion stands by force only; and not justly fear from him this reply, yours both by force and monie in the judgment of your own preachers. This is that which makes atheists in the land, whom they so much complain of: not the want of maintenance or preachers, as they alleage, but the many hirelings and cheaters that have the gospel in thir hands; hands that still crave, and are never satisfi'd. Likely ministers, indeed, to proclaim the

faith or to exhort our trust in God, when they themselves will not trust him to provide for them in the message wheron, they say, he sent them, but threaten for want of temporal means to desert it; calling that want of means, which is nothing els but the want of thir own faith; and would force us to pay the hire of building our faith to their covetous incredulitie. Doubtles, if God only be he who gives ministers to his church till the worlds end; and through the whole gospel never sent us for ministers to the schooles of Philosophie, but rather bids us beware of such *vain deceit, Col. 2, 8.* (which the

the primitive church, after two or three ages not remembring, brought herself quickly to confusion) if all the faithful be now *a holy and a royal priesthood,* 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. 9, not excluded from the dispensation of things holiest, after free election of the church and imposition of hands, there will not want ministers, elected out of all sorts and orders of men, for the Gospel makes no difference from the magistrate himself to the meanest artificer, if God evidently favor him with spiritual gifts, as he can easily and oft hath don, while those batchelor divines and doctors of the tippet have bin

passd by. Heretofore in the first evangelic times (and it were happy for Christendom if it were so again) ministers of the gospel were by nothing els distinguisht from other Christians but by thir spiritual knowledge and sanctitie of life, for which the church elected them to be her teachers and overseers, though not thereby to separate them from whatever calling she then found them following besides, as the example of S. *Paul* declares, and the first times of Christianitie. When once they affected to be calld a clergie, and became as it were a peculiar tribe of levites; a partie, a distinct order in the common-

commonwealth, bred up for divines in babling schooles and fed at the publick cost, good for nothing els but what was good for nothing, they soone grew idle: that idlenes with fulnes of bread begat pride and perpetual contention with thir feeders the despis'd laiie, through all ages ever since; to the perverting of religion, and the disturbance of all Christendom. And we may confidently conclude, it never will be otherwise while they are thus upheld undepending on the church, on which alone they anciently depended, and are by the magistrate publickly maintaind a numerous faction

of indigent persons, crept for the most part out of extream want and bad nurture, claiming by divine right and freehold the tenth of our estates, to monopolize the ministry as their peculiar, which is free and open to all able Christians, elected by any church. Under this pretence exempt from all other imployment, and inriching themselves on the publick, they last of all prove common incendiaries, and exalt thir horns against the magistrate himself that maintains them, as the priest of *Rome* did soone after against his benefactor the emperor, and the presbyters of late in *Scotland*. Of which hireling

hireling crew together with all the mischiefs, dissentions, troubles, warrs meerly of their kindling, Christendom might soone rid herself and be happie, if Christians would but know thir own dignitie, thir libertie, thir adoption, and let it not be wonderd if I say, thir spiritual priesthood, whereby they have all equally access to any ministerial function whenever calld by thir own abilities and the church, though they never came neer commencement or universitie. But while Protestants, to avoid the due labor of understanding thir own religion are content to lodge it in the breast or rather in the books

of

of a clergie-man, and to take it thence by scraps and mammooks as he dispences it in his sundays dole, they will be alwaies learning and never knowing, alwaies infants, alwaies either his vassals, as lay-papists are to their priests, or at odds with him, as reformed principles give them som light to be not wholly conformable, whence infinit disturbances in the state, as they do, must needs follow. Thus much I had to say; and, I suppose, what may be anough to them who are not avariciously bent otherwise, touching the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church; then which nothing

thing can more conduce to truth, to peace and all happines both in church and ſtate. If I be not heard nor beleevd, the event will bear me witnes to have ſpoken truth: and I in the mean while have borne my witnes not out of ſeaſon to the church and to my countrey.

The end.

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